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ABSTRACT

This newsletter consists of two parts, the first dealing with issues related to all nation members of the Council of Europe, and the second containing reports from eleven individual countries. The first section contains reports of two conferences: the ad hoc conference of Ministers of Education (reported in French), and a conference on the development of democratic institutions in Europe. Among the English language reports from individual countries are discussions of the objectives and availability of higher education in Denmark, West Germany, and the United Kingdom. Articles related to employment and employability of school graduates, vocational training and related issues in West Germany, Ireland, Norway and Sweden are included. Reports from Denmark, Sweden, and the United Kingdom concern selection of students. Other reports deal with educational reform (Austria), a Danish university, and teacher education (Netherlands). (SD)

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NEWS-LETTER FAITS NOUVEAUX

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CONFERENCE AD HOC DES MINISTRES DE L'EDUCATION

Les responsables de l'enseignement de 22 pays européens dont quatorze ministres et secrétaires d'Etat, réunis en conférence informelle sous l'égide du Conseil de l'Europe à Obernai près de Strasbourg le 17 mai 1976, ont insisté sur la nécessité de multiplier les échanges de vues.

Ce colloque "tous azinuts" a notamment permis de préparer la conférence permanente des ministres de l'éducation du Conseil de l'Europe qui doit se tenir en 1977 à Ankara et dont le thème central sera "L'école et la société".

M. Bertil ZACHRISSON, ministre suédois de l'éducation, qui présidait la réunion d'Obernai a notamment souligné l'aspect positif d'une communication constante dans un secteur qui est en évolution permanente. Les ministres semblaient écarter la possibilité d'une politique commune de l'éducation, mais souhaitaient en revanche multiplier les confrontations afin d'examiner, sur des problèmes particuliers, les solutions qui pourraient être adoptées par un ou plusieurs partenaires. Ainsi le ministre français, M. René HABY, estimait qu'il fallait s'"inspirer mutuellement". "Mais c'est à l'intérieur du pays, de la nation, que nous arriverons à progresser", a dit M. HABY. "Il est normal que l'indépendance et la richesse qui caractérisent chaque pays, notamment en matière d'éducation soient un obstacle à la constitution rapide d'une union".

M. Guido BRUNNER, Commissaire des Communautés Européennes pour la recherche, la science et l'éducation, a notamment proposé au cours de la conférence de coordonner les travaux des 22 signataires de la Convention Culturelle du Conseil de l'Europe avec ceux engagés au sein des "Neuf". "Ces échanges de vues, a-t-il estimé, permettraient de résoudre en droit communautaire les problèmes graves qui se posent à nous tous".

Les participants à cette réunion informelle ont enfin conclu à "une convergence des systèmes éducatifs européens", qui conservent malgré tout leur propre originalité.

A défaut voulu de communiqué, c'est M. Haby qui a résumé les travaux de la journée lors d'une conférence de presse : une réunion informelle au cours de laquelle chaque participant a pu entendre le témoignage de ses collègues quant aux expériences, aux réussites, aux difficultés, et aux échecs en matière d'éducation. Un moyen sans doute de mieux harmoniser programmes et méthodes pour un enseignement qui doit contribuer à la construction de l'unité européenne.

En fait, l'un des objectifs de la réunion semblait être, pour M. Guido Brunner, de proposer aux pays signataires de la Convention Culturelle Européenne un schéma de coopération préalablement accepté par les "Neuf" et qui répondrait, en matière d'éducation, à trois grandes préoccupations :

- La mobilité. Celle des enseignants, celle des étudiants. La mobilité aussi d'un système universitaire et scolaire qui doit s'adapter aux différences économiques et géographiques.
- La formation, et notamment la formation professionnelle des jeunes, dont l'absence est facteur de chômage.
- L'enseignement des enfants de travailleurs migrants.

Mais de toutes ces discussions, que penseront demain les jeunes Européens concernés ? La réponse pourrait leur être donnée par M. Rodriguez ALVEZ, ministre de l'Education et de la Science du Portugal, qui déclarait "qu'il appartient aux jeunes de maintenir à travers la permanente insatisfaction la dynamique propre aux grands changements sociaux que nous voulons installer".

Agence France Presse, 17/V/1976 ; Les dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace, 18/V/1976 ;
Informationen Bildung Wissenschaft, 20/V/1976

Descripteurs EUDISED : politique de l'Education ; coopération internationale ; ministre de l'Education ; Europe.

EDUCATION POLICIES AND DEMOCRACY

A conference on the development of democratic institutions in Europe was convened by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 21-23 April 1976 in Strasbourg in which over 200 parliamentarians and academics from all over Europe participated. Discussion took place in committees and one of the three committees set up by the conference dealt with the theme : Education policies and democracy. The papers presented on this theme and the discussion were summarised by Professor Bernard CRICK, Birkbeck College, London, the rapporteur of the committee. We reproduce below excerpts of the report.

Democracy arose in parliaments, in parties and in trade unions, not in schools ; but its further extension, or even its consolidation and preservation, could be frustrated by educational systems which fail to help the young to become interested in politics and to gain the skills, attitudes and knowledge which make people effective, critical and sensible participators and also provide the future generations of leaders.

While education cannot of itself change society, yet it must assist in change, can frustrate change, and needs more integration with society, not less. But the integration that most of us were thinking of was not an integration, as is so often argued, for economic usefulness, as if schools are simply training grounds for industry, but for civic or political usefulness. Education can do much, if teachers are trusted and their methods are right, to increase levels of public awareness of politics and participation - if that is what the politicians want. They say they do, but if they really want active citizens and not just good subjects, society is likely to be rather different from what it is now.

Equality of opportunity

Professor Wolfgang MITTER, Frankfurt, presented a paper on school systems and equality of opportunity. He drew our attention to recent research that tends to cast doubt on how effective schools can be positively to reduce inequality of opportunity if judged by results. In an open and pluralistic society we must recognise that equality cannot be imposed on schools, nor is it likely to succeed if it was, but knowing this does not remove the problem, rather it places an even greater commitment on politicians and educators to contribute to the reduction of inequality in education.

Professor Mitter argued that the general extension of schooling to ten compulsory years now leaves adequate time for a solid vocational orientation. Most countries were now pursuing policies of comprehensive education even if rarely to the total exclusion of other forms ; but the real problems of the future may lie in the variety of experiment and of the degree of streaming or not allowed within such systems, rather than the argument about whether to have such systems at all. Some degree of common education does seem a prerequisite of any secure sense of common citizenship.

The discussion brought out, as was to be expected, considerable differences between egalitarian and libertarian sentiments. Some argued that even equality of opportunity, let alone of result, could not be achieved in the public sector of education while private or confessional sectors were allowed to operate to different rules or operate at all. But some saw this diversity as an essential part of democracy, if seen, in part at least, as expressing a plurality of interests and ideals, divisions of power as well as unifying principles. Such an argument is never resolvable, rather is only politically resolvable. But there was surprising agreement, both between egalitarians and libertarians, that attempts to produce equality through schools alone are bound to fail. If equality is the objective, school reorganisation can only follow and assist more radical redistributive measures in wages and incomes and ownership of property. I think I can report a general desire not to claim that schools can be vehicles of social change, only to claim more modestly, negatively but still of great importance, that they can frustrate change if badly organised.

Democracy and participation

This point came up again when Professor Willem LANGEVELD, Amsterdam, gave a provocative paper on the effect of school systems and teacher training on democratic beliefs and behaviour. He pointed out that school systems are part of the wider society and are used by that society to socialise children into acceptance of conventional and largely authoritarian values and beliefs, rather than to educate them towards forming their own personalities not merely towards democratic values, but by practising democracy in schools. It should be the overriding objective of schools to create and nurture democratic values, but this could only be done by democratic behaviour, not just in the individual classroom for one lesson a week, but in the basic organisation of schools themselves, and in all subjects at all times. Young people learn best by participating, by working things out for themselves, and genuine democratic values can only be learned through genuine democratic behaviour. Such democratisation of education must begin with teacher training.

I cannot report that there was general agreement with this thesis. Most felt that there is much knowledge that is needed and has to be taught, but cannot be learned participatively. Some felt that the case for making schools participative democracies erred in seeing all authority as repressive, and that there was need, on the contrary, to get children to distinguish between justifiable authority or plain authoritarianism : laying down the law about things that are inherently problematic or are no business of teachers anyway to be pontifical about. Some claimed there was far more participation in most schools than the paper suggested ; others supported the account of schools being basically authoritarian.

What is most needed is more public knowledge of how in some countries and some schools increased participation and self-imposition of tasks and goals works in practice. People need convincing that the house does not fall down if teachers discuss with pupils what to do - and "people" does mean politicians and parents and officials, not just teachers themselves ; public nervousness hinders educational experiment.

Political literacy

This is particularly clear when considering the paper by Professor Ian LISTER, York, on the aims and methods of political education. For although there is general agreement in governments that civics should be taught, usually rather late, in schools, there is still great public and official worry about the teaching of politics, that is telling about and discussing issues, principles and ideologies in schools - despite much proof of appalling public ignorance about political and economic issues.

Professor Lister argues that it is essential for modern government to encourage both a knowledgeable and an active, participative citizenry. This must begin in schools. He saw the objects of political education being to achieve what he and I have called "political literacy" : a compound of skills, attitudes and knowledge. Participation is useless without knowledge but knowledge of politics is pointless, indeed usually boring and repressive, if it is not relevant to participation. And if participation is to be accepted as an objective, traditional teaching methods will not suffice.

There was indeed in the discussion a general feeling that the educational contribution to democracy means not just an effort by teachers themselves, but an effort to bring politicians and political commentators far more often into contact with children, but always to talk about real issues, not the glories of the constitution. Accountability and communication were stressed as just as important for democracy as direct participation. There was general agreement that what Ian Lister called "political voyeurism", seeing politics as a spectator sport, was a fairly useless activity.

To make people politically literate is, of course, always to run the risk that people, particularly young people, will use such literacy. Is that what we want ? If not, is Professor Langeveld then not right, that it is all a bluff, that we are educating for passivity and production, not for individuality and citizenship ?

Conference Papers

EUDISED descriptors : democracy ; equal opportunity ; student participation ; political education.

AUSTRIA : STEADY PROGRESS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM

The grand old man of the European Social Democrats, Chancellor Bruno KREISKY, and his team of Ministers - Fred SINOWATZ for schools and Hertha FIRNBERG for higher education and research - continue to carry through a moderate reform policy without provoking the tensions and frictions which plague most of their neighbours.

The Higher Education Organisation Act which entered into force on 1 October 1975 (see News-letter 2/75) and gave rise to bitter controversy during the parliamentary debate, has so far been implemented without difficulty. For the majority of universities the new tripartite bodies consisting of representatives of the professors, the intermediate staff and the students have already been elected, and the changeover from the old to the new bodies was remarkably smooth.

The new school policy is centred on the school experiments (see News-letter 3/74). The number of schools participating voluntarily in the programme is growing from year to year. A report published in early April by the Education Ministry gives the following figures which indicate the priorities as well as the popularity of the reforms :

- early beginning of foreign language instruction (in the third grade of elementary school) : 5,400 classes ;
- comprehensive schools for the 10-14 year olds : 1,000 classes ;
- reform of the elementary school : 700 classes ;
- reform of the polytechnical year (ninth and final year of compulsory schooling) : 250 classes ;
- pre-primary classes for 5-6 year-olds : 220 classes ;
- reform of the upper stage of the grammar school : 140 classes.

Evaluation by researchers are an inbuilt element of these experiments. Detailed and objective reports on their progress and interim results are widely circulated, and it is to be expected that those reforms which have stood the test will be generally accepted throughout the country.

The reform of general and higher education is now being complemented by the reform of vocational school which provides theoretical instruction on a part-time basis for apprentices. 112 new curricula for 198 crafts and trades were issued by the Education Ministry in early May after consultation with all concerned. They will enter into force on 1 September 1976. Some 30 curricula have still to be elaborated in the course of the year to complete the reform. The new curricula are in the form of skeleton plans and leave room for the provinces to modify details of implementation in accordance with their economic and geographical situations. All curricula provide - in addition to the vocational subjects in question - instruction in civics, accountancy and optional subjects like English and sports.

Furthermore, an important initiative has been taken to co-ordinate and improve the present system of educational and vocational guidance. In March a "six-minister committee" comprising the Ministers for schools, higher education, social affairs, economics, agriculture and defence was created under the chairmanship of Hertha Firnberg. A committee of civil servants from the Ministries concerned on which also representatives of employer and employee organisations

and researchers will sit, is to assist the Ministers. Although there is at each school a teacher who acts as guidance officer and although there are guidance and career offices in each university town, it is felt that more and better information concerning the labour market and more efficient advice on choice of studies have to be given to pupils and students. This necessity is borne out by the latest figures according to which 22 % of students in higher education changed their study course and 21 % dropped out in the academic year 1974/75.

Finally, an interesting bill is at present being debated in a parliamentary sub-committee. It has been introduced by the Higher Education Minister, Mrs. Firnberg, and proposes to admit to the universities students without the secondary leaving certificate if they have successfully completed a 10 months' course. The course will be open to all who can pass its entrance examination. The course prepares students for a specific field of studies and grants admission to these studies only, not to all faculties. The course is intended in particular for mature students with experience in working life and with high motivation. The bill proposes to introduce this course on an experimental basis and to limit the number of students to be admitted under this procedure to 5 % of first year students.

Informationsdienst für Bildungspolitik und
Forschung, 16/IV, 7,15/V/1976 ; Österreichische
Hochschulzeitung, 1/V/1976 ; v.M.

EUDISED descriptors : higher education ; reform of education ;
experimental education ; vocational guidance ; access to education ;
Austria.

BELGIQUE : GENERALISATION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT RENOVE

La réforme de l'enseignement secondaire - désignée sous le terme d'enseignement rénové - sera généralisée dans tous les établissements secondaire francophones de l'Etat le 1er septembre 1978, comme il l'est depuis 1975 dans tous les lycées flamands. Cette récente décision du ministre de l'éducation, M. HUMBLET, qui met fin à la coexistence du "rénové" et du "traditionnel", a relancé la querelle passionnée des "anciens" et des "modernes".

L'enseignement traditionnel offre trois voies : les "latines" (avec des options latin-grec, latin-sciences et latin-mathématiques), les "modernes" (axées essentiellement sur les mathématiques et les langues modernes) et les "techniques". Les possibilités de passerelles sont rares et une hiérarchie s'est instaurée, les "latines" étant au sommet de l'échelle et les "techniques", qui sont surtout fréquentées par les enfants de milieu modeste, tout au bas.

Les milieux politiques progressistes ont voulu démocratiser l'enseignement et "favoriser l'intégration sociale en réconciliant l'homo sapiens et l'homo faber et en mettant fin à la hiérarchie entre les différentes formes d'enseignement". D'où la naissance de l'enseignement rénové. Il a fait ses premiers pas, "à titre expérimental" (car la réforme était controversée), dans quelques lycées en 1969-1970. Cent soixante-deux établissements de la région francophone le pratiquent aujourd'hui, tandis que quatre-vingt sept sont restés fidèles au système traditionnel.

L'enseignement rénové est divisé en trois degrés de deux ans chacun. Le premier cycle - l'observation - offre un large "tronc commun" de matières et quelques "essais" dans diverses options (latin, sciences, économie, techniques, arts), que les élèves doivent obligatoirement effectuer pour que l'on juge de leurs goûts et capacités. Dans le deuxième cycle - l'orientation - les options se précisent et le tronc commun se réduit à quelques cours de base. Le troisième cycle - la spécialisation - approfondit les matières de l'option choisie définitivement.

Les examens traditionnels sont supprimés et remplacés par une évaluation continue (la "docimologie"). Les enseignants classent quatre fois par an leurs élèves en "très bon", "bon", "suffisant", "faible" ou "insuffisant" (les notes chiffrées ont disparu), après la réunion d'un "conseil de classe" hebdomadaire qui examine l'évolution de chaque élève et juge du bon choix de l'option qui se précise d'année en année. En fin d'année, ce conseil de classe décide du passage à un niveau supérieur dans l'option choisie ou d'une orientation dans une autre discipline. Les professeurs sont invités "à tenir compte non seulement des connaissances de l'élève, mais aussi de son acquis et de sa façon de l'utiliser". On note aussi l'importance accordée aux travaux en groupes et l'existence de cours de rattrapage.

Pour ses défenseurs, l'enseignement rénové et personnalisé donne à chacun les mêmes chances de réussite dans son orientation future, quelles que soient ses conditions sociales et familiales. Il répond aussi aux besoins d'aujourd'hui en modifiant le contenu des cours, en faisant éclater les sections traditionnelles (il met fin au clivage entre l'enseignement général et l'enseignement technique) et en changeant les relations entre les maîtres et les élèves dans le sens d'une participation beaucoup plus large de l'élève à sa formation.

Le ministre de l'éducation a décidé la généralisation de ce système parce que, a-t-il expliqué, "il fallait mettre fin à la coexistence de deux styles d'enseignement, nuisible par la concurrence et la surenchère qu'elle entraîne ; il convenait aussi d'unifier l'enseignement secondaire pour en assurer une meilleure gestion".

La décision ministérielle a soulevé une vague de protestations non seulement dans l'enseignement traditionnel, mais aussi au sein des syndicats et dans les partis politiques. C'est qu'elle a été prise sans consultation des intéressés. Comité de défense du "traditionnel", "assemblées libres" de professeurs, d'étudiants et de parents, directeurs d'établissement, bureaux de partis, multiplient les communiqués hostiles. On y souligne que l'enseignement traditionnel a fait ses preuves, qu'il a modernisé ses méthodes et qu'il conserve la faveur des parents et des élèves. On y observe aussi qu'il est dangereux d'imposer hâtivement un système expérimental. Les premiers élèves "rénovés" viennent, en effet, de terminer leurs six années d'études secondaires, et il est peut-être encore trop tôt pour juger des résultats.

Un argument politique est venu compliquer les choses. L'enseignement libre met, en effet, moins d'empressement à généraliser le "rénové". L'enseignement libre, pour sa part, reste ... libre de pratiquer à la fois le "rénové" et le "traditionnel". C'est ce qu'il compte faire, d'autant que ses établissements sont autonomes et que sa gestion est décentralisée. Ses dirigeants nationaux poussent à une certaine unification, mais ne vont pas plus loin pour l'instant que l'application générale de la seule "docimologie" et se refusent à condamner le "traditionnel".

"L'application de la réforme sera souple, concertée et ordonnée" vient de déclarer le ministre, que les voix sages l'incitent à la prudence.

Le Monde de l'Education, avril 1976; M.B.

Descripteurs EUDISED : Réforme de l'enseignement ; enseignement secondaire ; démocratisation ; égalité des chances ; Belgique.

DENMARK : PROPOSED LIMITATION OF ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The first reading of a bill, presented by Mrs. Ritt BJERREGAARD, Minister of Education, proposing restrictions on the number of students entering all forms of higher education has revealed a clear majority in the Danish parliament for some form of limitation. All the major political parties, except the Communists and the left-wing Socialists, supported the proposals in principle. It therefore seems likely that the measure will become law before the summer.

From next year it is proposed that the number of students admitted to higher education be fixed at its present level, i.e. 20,000 corresponding to 27 % of the age group. This, it is hoped, will reduce pressure on the institutions at a time when economic resources are strained to the limit and will contribute to reducing the threat of widespread unemployment among young graduates. The number of students to be admitted to higher education will be fixed annually on the basis of two principal criteria : availability of educational facilities and employment prospectives. The Minister is of the opinion that the capacity of available facilities is the most important criterion, and that it will not be possible, at least during the first years of restricted entry, to take the employment situation fully into consideration.

As far as colleges of education are concerned, limitation of entry is already a fact. Ministerial forecasts of a surplus of teachers in the comprehensive schools by the end of the decade are the official basis for a series of cutbacks which started last year. Some of the larger colleges will lose up to a third of their present intake by 1978.

The general move towards limiting access to higher education is also to be seen in a government proposal sent to the universities for opinion. The government proposes, in the light of recommendations made by the Committee on medical training, that the number of students entering medical faculties be sharply reduced. The suggestion is that only 850 students should be accepted this year, about half last year's intake. Available places at each medical faculty would be divided into three groups. Groups I and II would comprise applicants who have passed the upper secondary school leaving examination or its equivalent. Into Group I, to which would be allocated 50 % of available places, would be placed those students who have a high grade point average on the leaving examination in a 0-13 scale (a minimum of 7.9 to 1.6 is proposed). Group II would be allotted 40 % of available places and would comprise students falling below the qualifying grade point average. This examination mark could, however, be raised as the result of work experience of at least 10 months' duration. After this period the grade point average could be multiplied by 1.10, after 11 months by 1.11, and so on until 25 months of work experience after which the grade could be raised by 1.25. Group III would get 10 % of the places available for medical studies. In this Group would be found in particular applicants over 25 years of age.

In the bill which has just received its first reading it is envisaged that restriction of admission to other university faculties will follow. But whereas there would be cuts in the number of students entering courses in sociology, psychology and the humanities in general, it is suggested that admission to some areas of business studies and engineering might be increased.

The bill proposes the introduction of a number of degree courses the duration of which would be less than the usual six or seven years. This clause has been received with some scepticism in the light of events at the Roskilde University Centre which of late has seen efforts to bring it more in line with traditional universities.

Weekendavisen 26/III/1976; 9.14/IV/1976;
The Times Higher Education Supplement,
28/V/1976; E.B.P.

EDDISED descriptors : access to education ; higher education ;
numerous classes ; admission requirements ; Denmark.

DENMARK : THE FUTURE OF THE ROSKILDE UNIVERSITY CENTRE CONTESTED

A motion tabled by the Conservative Party that the Roskilde University Centre - known for its innovative nature - should be closed as an independent university, with the possibility that its functions be taken over by the University of Copenhagen, was defeated by a mere two votes after a day-long parliamentary debate at the beginning of May.

Matters had been brought to a head by the unprecedented expulsion of 300 second-year students who refused to sit examinations. Established in 1972 to relieve student pressure on educational facilities in the greater Copenhagen area, the centre had among its main objectives to promote interdisciplinary studies, facilitate opportunities for transfer between courses and ward off the continued gravitation towards traditional degree courses lasting between 5 and 6 1/2 years. Roskilde was to be similar to American junior colleges, offering preparatory pre-degree courses, but also with the possibility for students to opt later for three-year degree courses.

The academic standards of the two-year basic courses came under criticism for being too low, and to meet this criticism Mrs. Ritt BJERREGAARD, Minister of Education, insisted in summer 1975 on tighter academic standards, fixed courses rather than project work, and examinations that would be assessed externally, thus bringing the Centre into line with the rest of Danish higher education. Students made use of administrative regulations to retard implementation of the change of policy, and the Minister, dissatisfied, won parliamentary backing in December for a temporary suspension of the Centre's normal administration and its replacement by a government appointed triumvirate of rectors.

New examinations, announced in January, to assess the recently introduced obligatory course work met with a storm of protest. Negotiations between the rectors and the students were inconclusive with the result that over 200 students refused to sit their examinations. When new negotiations failed, the Minister of Education decided on the expulsion of the students concerned. This in turn provoked protests - from academics who disliked the precedent, from lawyers who claimed the action was illegal, from students throughout the country

who boycotted classes and held mass meetings. The examination assessors assured students that for assessment purposes less weight would be given to the results obtained in the newly introduced examinations than to the results of the longer established project work. The students, however, insisted that those who had been expelled be reinstated. The Minister acceded to their request on the eve of the parliamentary debate, and for their part the students promptly agreed to register for the examinations.

As a result of the latest parliamentary decision, Roskilde would appear to have had its role as an independent experimental university confirmed - at least for the immediate future, but the closeness of the parliamentary vote must leave doubts about the centre's long-term development.

The Times Educational Supplement, 14/V/1976;
The Times Higher Education Supplement, 14/V/76;
Weekendavisen, 7/V/1976 ; B.B.P.

EUDISED descriptors : higher education ; university ; experimentation ; student protest ; Denmark.

FRANCE : L'EDUCATION EN PERTE DE PRIORITE DANS LE VIIe PLAN

Présenté mi-mai à la discussion parlementaire par le gouvernement, le rapport concernant le VIIe Plan (1976-1980) consacre peu de place à l'éducation. En outre, l'éducation n'est plus une priorité absolue dans le développement social. Ainsi, les dépenses d'éducation prévues au Plan sont en baisse : pour les équipements, 11,3 % des dépenses publiques en 1975 et 10,6 % en 1980 (-moins 0,7 %) ; pour les dépenses de fonctionnement, 25,3 % en 1975 et 25,2 % en 1980 (-moins 0,6 %).

Divisé en six chapitres, le document préparé par la Commission de l'Education comprend à la fois une analyse de la situation présente et des propositions dont les principales sont les suivantes :

L'égalisation des chances

La commission préconise un accroissement de la scolarisation dans l'enseignement préscolaire pour les enfants de deux à quatre ans. Un effort particulier serait fait en faveur des communes rurales ainsi que pour le dépistage et la prévention des handicaps physiques et psychiques. La commission souhaite, d'autre part, un accroissement de l'aide financière pour les familles aux revenus modestes et le développement de la formation permanente : pédagogie des adultes, congé-éducation, notamment pour les travailleurs les moins qualifiés.

L'amélioration des relations entre la formation et l'emploi

La commission estime que la réforme du premier cycle de l'enseignement secondaire doit s'accompagner d'une amélioration de la formation professionnelle. Celle-ci doit être au minimum de deux années après le collège, quitte à avoir une surqualification pour certains emplois. La capacité d'accueil du service public pour les jeunes sans emploi devrait être élargie, et enfin, de nouveaux enseignements devraient permettre de préparer les jeunes, pendant leur scolarité, au monde du travail.

Un enseignement supérieur correspondant aux besoins de la société

Si la commission reprend les thèses selon lesquelles il faut professionnaliser l'enseignement supérieur, elle estime toutefois que cette orientation ne doit pas conduire à raccourcir la durée des études. "L'enseignement universitaire doit conserver dans l'intérêt même de notre économie, et de celui des étudiants, le caractère théorique et général qui constitue sa valeur essentielle". La commission souhaite également que les effectifs des instituts universitaires de technologie ne soient pas gonflés afin de maintenir la valeur du diplôme délivré et que les écoles d'ingénieurs soient davantage ouvertes aux étudiants ayant fait un premier cycle universitaire. En médecine la sélection doit être maintenue, mais il convient d'opérer un rééquilibrage entre généralistes et spécialistes qui représentent actuellement près des deux tiers des nouveaux diplômés.

Ouverture de l'école et de la pédagogie

Dans ce chapitre, la commission a repris un certain nombre de thèmes de la réforme mise en oeuvre par M. HABY : acquisition des mathématiques à l'école élémentaire, enseignement de la technologie dans le premier cycle de l'enseignement secondaire, intégration des moyens audio-visuels par une pédagogie et une formation des enseignants plus appropriées. La commission insiste, d'autre part, sur la nécessité d'appliquer réellement le "tiers temps" à l'école élémentaire (développement des activités sportives et d'éducation physique).

La formation continue

La commission estime que la formation initiale ne doit pas être réduite par le développement de la formation permanente et elle propose diverses formules pour contrôler les organismes et les actions de formation.

Une plus grande efficacité du système éducatif

La commission préconise, entre autres, d'améliorer l'information pour permettre une meilleure orientation. Elle estime que la formation des maîtres du secondaire est une priorité absolue qui doit s'intégrer dans un projet d'ensemble de revalorisation de la fonction du corps enseignant.

Le programme d'actions prioritaires

A partir de ces propositions, le gouvernement a retenu un programme d'actions prioritaires. Il s'agit "de réduire les handicaps dus à l'environnement social et familial des enfants", étant entendu que les besoins nouveaux en personnel et en équipement seront plus faibles qu'auparavant, en conséquence de la baisse de la natalité. Quatre actions figurent dans ce programme pour lequel un crédit de 20.551 millions de francs est prévu.

La première consiste à développer l'enseignement pré-élémentaire : scolariser, en 1980, 45 % des enfants de deux ans et plus de 90 % des enfants de trois ans ; réduire les disparités liées aux situations géographiques, abaisser à trente-cinq élèves le nombre maximum d'élèves par classe.

La seconde action prévue concerne l'enseignement de la technologie dans les collèges : il s'agit de donner à tous les élèves des collèges une éducation manuelle et technique. Une telle réforme suppose que deux mille "classes-ateliers" soient construites d'ici à 1980.

Le programme prévoit aussi le développement de l'animation culturelle en milieu scolaire : "Doublé le nombre des élèves touchés par les actions d'animation culturelle en milieu scolaire pour développer leurs capacités d'expression en faisant appel à leur imagination et à leur sensibilité".

Cette action sera menée avec des personnes extérieures au corps enseignant et concernera notamment le théâtre, la musique, l'expression corporelle, les arts plastiques et l'audio-visuel.

Enfin, le gouvernement se fixe comme objectif d'assurer en 1980, trois heures d'éducation physique et sportive dans le premier cycle secondaire et deux heures dans le second cycle. Le programme prévoit que près de cinq mille enseignants seront recrutés de 1976 à 1980 et que diverses mesures favoriseront le développement du sport extra-scolaire.

Le Monde, 12/V/1976 ; C.P.

Descripteurs EUDISED : Planification de l'éducation ; budget de l'Etat ; coût de l'Education ; politique de l'Education ; France.

FRANCE : APPLICATION DE LA REFORME DE L'ECOLE PRIMAIRE ET SECONDAIRE

Poursuivant la mise en place de la réforme du système éducatif (cf News-letter/Faits Nouveaux 2/75), M. R. HABY, Ministre de l'Education, vient d'adresser à l'inspection générale pour l'école élémentaire une note d'orientation concernant l'organisation pédagogique des premières années de scolarité. Il a, d'autre part, rendu publics un nouveau texte sur les contenus de l'enseignement ainsi que deux avant-projets de décrets concernant "l'organisation administrative et financière des lycées et collèges" et "le fonctionnement du comité de parents" créé dans les écoles.

La liaison entre les enseignements maternel et élémentaire

Dans sa note d'orientation, M. Haby estime que l'objectif prioritaire des premières années de la scolarité est l'acquisition, dans les meilleures conditions possibles, des apprentissages instrumentaux de base : la maîtrise de la langue maternelle (lecture et écriture) et l'initiation mathématique. Pour cela, il considère l'ensemble formé par la dernière année d'école maternelle et un cycle préparatoire en deux années à l'école élémentaire. Il précise qu'une liste assez détaillée d'exercices progressifs devra être élaborée pour chacune des trois années. Le ministre souhaite, d'autre part, que la même institutrice suive sa classe de maternelle en première année de cycle préparatoire.

- La première année regroupera les enfants de cinq à six ans et se situera en grande section d'école maternelle. Certaines des activités pourront, dans des perspectives de sensibilisation, relever déjà du langage écrit ou utiliser des données à signification mathématique.
- La deuxième année, constituée par la première classe de l'enseignement primaire, réunira le même groupe d'élèves (enfants de six à sept ans) que la section maternelle ci-dessus. La rupture de style pédagogique devra être aussi atténuée que possible, notamment au début. Après six à huit semaines, les activités devront cependant s'orienter vers les apprentissages proprement dits.

Afin de permettre à chaque élève de progresser selon son rythme, la classe devra, tout en conservant un champ d'activités communes (éducation corporelle, activités d'éveil et d'expression), s'organiser en groupes relativement homogènes, plus ou moins avancés dans les apprentissages fondamentaux.

- La troisième année (enfants de sept à huit ans) s'appliquera au même groupe d'élèves, sauf exception très rare d'élèves qui pourront en être dispensés si leur maturité intellectuelle et affective est suffisante et s'ils ont atteint largement les objectifs assignés.

Le projet de M. Haby d'instituer pour la quasi-totalité des enfants un cours préparatoire en deux années, met fin à la polémique soulevée par son projet initial de "cours préparatoire à deux vitesses". Selon ce dernier projet, les élèves entrant à l'école élémentaire pouvaient "après six à huit semaines d'observation", rester au cours préparatoire première année afin d'y progresser à un rythme plus lent. Les autres passaient en cours préparatoire deuxième année.

La solution actuelle proposée par le ministre semble résoudre un problème majeur : éviter le grand nombre de redoublements constatés actuellement à ce niveau sans pour autant instaurer une sélection précoce des enfants. Il s'agira, en fait, d'une prolongation d'un an de la scolarité à l'école élémentaire (passant ainsi de cinq à six années) et qui concernera les enfants âgés de six à douze ans.

Lycées et collèges

Le texte de M. Haby sur les contenus de l'enseignement confirme l'apparition de nouveaux enseignements dans les quatre années de collège : sciences physiques, économie, sciences humaines, éducation manuelle et technologique.

Compte tenu des différences de capacité entre élèves et de la nécessité de rechercher pour tous l'acquisition d'une formation de base, on définira pour chaque domaine de formation et chaque niveau d'enseignement un ensemble nettement délimité et structuré de connaissances et de savoir ("contenu fondamental" ou encore "programme-noyau").

Dans les trois années de lycées, la formation commune de base sera, autant que possible, reliée aux préoccupations immédiates du jeune : connaissance du monde contemporain, compréhension de l'environnement social, naturel et culturel, préparation de sa vie de citoyen et de travailleur. L'aspect essentiel, à ce niveau, est que l'élève sera appelé à faire preuve de plus en plus d'autonomie et de responsabilité personnelle dans le choix de son orientation, dans son travail et dans l'évaluation de celui-ci.

Pour les enseignements technologiques, le ministre prévoit la mise en place de blocs d'enseignements technologiques permettant de combiner diverses options et de diversifier ainsi les voies de formation. Le système d'unités capitalisables pourra être généralisé.

D'une manière générale, il s'agit d'ajouter aux objectifs traditionnels de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur (lycées) deux préoccupations : développer la capacité au changement et préparer les élèves à une formation permanente.

Participation des parents et des élèves

Désormais, tous les établissements secondaires seront soumis à un même régime juridique et financier, ce qui implique la prise en charge par l'Etat de l'ensemble des dépenses de fonctionnement. Dénommés "établissements publics nationaux d'enseignement", tous bénéficieront de la reconnaissance de la personnalité morale et de l'autonomie financière.

L'administration des établissements, l'organisation de la vie scolaire reposent sur l'idée de "participation". Cependant, l'autorité des chefs d'établissements est clairement affirmée et leurs responsabilités accrues.

Le chef d'établissement sera assisté par le Conseil d'établissement qui se substituera à la fois au Conseil d'administration, à la Commission permanente et au Conseil de discipline. Toutes les catégories - administration, enseignants, parents, élèves, personnalités extérieures - y sont représentées à parts égales. Le rôle de ce conseil ne sera pas seulement administratif : il aura un pouvoir délibératif, consultatif et disciplinaire. En ce qui concerne les conseils de classes, les délégués des parents et des élèves participeront à toutes les délibérations..

La nouvelle organisation ménage cependant le secret des délibérations des enseignants puisqu'un conseil de professeurs est créé. Il a notamment pour mission de préparer le bilan scolaire de chaque élève qui est ensuite examiné par le conseil de classe.

D'autre part, les écoles primaires connaîtront en 1977 une première tentative de participation : un "comité de parents" composé des représentants des parents, élus au scrutin uninominal, formera, avec le conseil des maîtres, le conseil des écoles.

Le Monde, 7,10/IV/76;2/VI/76;C.P.

Descripteurs EUDISED : Réforme de l'enseignement ; éducation préscolaire ; enseignement primaire ; enseignement secondaire ; programme d'études ; participation des parents ; France.

FRANCE : LA SITUATION DE L'UNIVERSITE

Le mouvement de protestation contre l'arrêté réformant le second cycle des études universitaires (cf News-letter/Faits Nouveaux 1/76) s'est intensifié au cours des derniers mois et des actions de grève ont touché peu à peu toutes les universités.

Le premier élément remarquable a été le nombre et la nature des unités d'enseignement gagnées par la grève. Les étudiants littéraires ont été aux premières lignes : ce sont, en effet, les plus touchés par l'adaptation actuelle de l'enseignement supérieur et la crise de l'emploi. L'argument du gouvernement selon lequel la réforme avait pour but de réduire les filières improductives pour les remplacer, peu à peu, par d'autres plus rentables sur le plan professionnel a fait prendre davantage conscience aux étudiants à quel point leur situation était sans issue et a renforcé leur combativité.

Plus surprenant a été l'engagement dans la grève des étudiants en sciences et en sciences économiques. Pour les premiers la situation n'est guère différente de celle des littéraires mais pour les économistes, le problème de l'emploi se pose moins directement. Par contre, c'est une discipline dans laquelle le niveau de politisation est naturellement assez fort.

Le second élément surprenant a été la durée du mouvement. Même la perspective des examens n'a pu faire rentrer les étudiants dans le rang. Cette résistance est un élément nouveau : elle est l'indice du discrédit dans lequel les études elles-mêmes et les diplômes qui les sanctionnent sont tenus par un grand nombre d'étudiants.

Il faut également remarquer que le mouvement de grève des étudiants a bénéficié du soutien d'un grand nombre d'enseignants. En effet, les inquiétudes sur le sort de certains enseignements, sur la répartition des allocations de troisième cycle ou la réorganisation du technique supérieur rejoignaient celles des étudiants. De plus, ce mouvement coïncidait aussi avec une action de l'université, pour obtenir une rallonge des crédits de fonctionnement.

Face à cette crise, Madame A. SAUNIER-SEITE, Secrétaire d'Etat aux universités s'est engagée à entamer de nouvelles discussions sur l'ensemble des points soulevant des difficultés. Réunie fin avril, la Commission permanente de la Conférence des présidents d'université lui a proposé une série de mesures susceptibles de mettre un terme au conflit. Ces mesures étaient, d'une part, l'annulation de la circulaire portant sur l'application de la réforme du second cycle, et d'autre part, des garanties définies par les moyens juridiques appropriés sur huit points controversés de la réforme :

- Les formations fondamentales actuellement dispersées seront reconduites sur simple demande des universités.
- Des critères nationaux d'habilitation seront définis en association avec le Conseil national de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche et la Conférence des présidents.
- La licence ne sera pas un diplôme terminal dans les formations fondamentales conduisant aux carrières de l'enseignement et de la recherche.
- Les universités ne pourront pas fixer elles-mêmes des règles d'accès différentes pour des formations identiques.
- Les habilitations pour les futures licences et maîtrises seront accordées indépendamment des délais précisés dans l'arrêté (5 ans).
- Les membres des groupes d'études techniques chargés de donner leur avis sur ces habilitations et qui seront en partie des représentants des intérêts économiques, pourront être désignés par le secrétariat d'Etat sur proposition du Comité consultatif des universités et de la Conférence des présidents.
- Ces groupes d'études techniques auront un rôle exclusivement consultatif.
- Des moyens supplémentaires seront attribués aux universités pour la mise en place de la réforme.

Le secrétaire d'Etat a acquiescé à la première demande des présidents, rassurant ceux d'entre eux qui craignaient de voir disparaître certaines formations à caractère général telles que des licences de droit ou de lettres que leur université assure depuis plusieurs années. Elle a également confirmé son accord sur les deux dernières garanties demandées. Sur les autres points, Mme Saunier-Seite a précisé qu'une nouvelle circulaire d'application serait rédigée à partir des accords de principe dégagés au cours de la réunion et en concertation avec la commission permanente. Mais, pour l'ensemble, l'arrêté réformant le second cycle sera maintenu.

La réunion de la Commission permanente de la Conférence des présidents d'université et son entrevue avec le secrétaire d'Etat ont surtout eu des conséquences psychologiques. Les présidents qui avaient demandé le retrait de la réforme, apportant ainsi un soutien considérable aux étudiants grévistes, semblent maintenant prêt à négocier sur divers aspects de l'arrêté. Le désir des présidents est manifeste de ne pas vouloir envenimer les choses et de permettre au secrétaire d'Etat de faire des concessions sans perdre la face. Il sera sans doute possible de modifier l'esprit de la réforme sans en changer la lettre.

En ce qui concerne l'organisation des examens, la prolongation des grèves a provoqué une certaine anxiété quant au déroulement de la session de juin. Les règlements en vigueur demandent, en effet, que la sanction des études se fasse d'une double façon, à la fois par un contrôle continu des connaissances et par des examens terminaux. Depuis 1968, il n'y a pratiquement plus de programmes nationaux fixés pour les différents diplômes, mais seulement une liste des matières à respecter, les programmes proprement dits étant librement choisis par les universités. Les conseils d'université fixent eux-mêmes, un mois après la rentrée, les modalités des examens mais ne peuvent plus ensuite revenir sur leur décision. Seul le secrétaire d'Etat a le pouvoir de le faire.

Mme Saunier-Seïte, qui avait été très ferme, annonçant que si les enseignements normaux ne pouvaient être assurés, les diplômes ne seraient plus décernés, semble maintenant plus conciliante, estimant qu'il n'y avait que très peu d'universités qui ne soient pas en mesure de faire passer normalement les examens. Les sections où l'organisation des examens fait encore problème ne concerneraient, en fait, qu'un dixième des étudiants. Il appartient aux présidents d'organiser les examens et aux recteurs d'apposer ou de refuser le visa préalable à la délivrance des diplômes nationaux. D'une façon générale, les mesures nécessaires doivent être prises pour que les étudiants ne soient pas lésés et que le plus grand nombre d'entre eux puissent passer leurs examens dans des conditions régulières avant les vacances d'été. Mme Saunier-Seïte a précisé que dans les cas les plus flagrants de laxisme, elle envisageait de retirer les habilitations aux universités concernées dès la rentrée 1976-1977.

La crise que vient de traverser l'université n'a fait que révéler la fragilité de ses institutions. Face à un mouvement d'étudiants exprimant moins une volonté de lutte qu'une inquiétude, les universités se sont trouvées sans prise sur les événements. En fait, elles ne disposent que de pouvoirs limités : elles ne sont pas maîtresses de leurs ressources qui viennent en totalité de l'Etat, elles ne peuvent recruter librement leurs enseignants ni déterminer leurs carrières. Toutes les questions importantes remontent ainsi au pouvoir de tutelle, au secrétariat d'Etat. Celui-ci met, en définitive les universitaires en face de leurs responsabilités : tout se passe comme si l'on considérait les universités comme incapables de se gouverner seules. Elles n'ont pas su se transformer, elles ont, en majorité, refusé la réforme présentée par le gouvernement, et celui-ci pourrait en tirer les conséquences. Les dispositions prévues laissent présager la fin de l'autonomie égalitariste où les établissements détermineraient collectivement des règles de financement, un mode de relation avec l'autorité de tutelle ou un système d'évaluation de la recherche.

Le Monde de l'Education, juin 1976;

Le Monde, 14, 15, 28/IV/1976 ; 3, 4, 5/VI/1976 ; C.P.

Descripteurs EUDISED : Crise de l'enseignement ; université ; autonomie ; France.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY : BETTER EDUCATION TO REDUCE YOUTH
UNEMPLOYMENT

Politicians, experts and public opinion are convinced that the improvement of vocational and technical education and the creation of additional training places, in particular for the larger age-groups of the early sixties now beginning to leave school are the top priorities of education policy. However, all attempts to reach a consensus on the controversial vocational education bill (see News-letter 1/76) have so far failed : the bill adopted by the Federal Parliament in April was rejected in May by its Lander Chamber in which the opposition parties muster a majority. The bill is now before the mediation committee of both Houses. It may or may not succeed in finding a compromise - a task difficult to achieve on the eve of the general elections which will be held in October.

The Lander which maintain the schools, colleges and universities and thus bear the responsibility for the functioning of the education system, are faced with the particularly acute problem of youth unemployment. The fact that some 80 % of the unemployed under 25 years of age have not completed vocational training and that some 40 % of them are drop-outs from the compulsory school who have not obtained its leaving certificate, proves that youth unemployment is also an educational problem. A survey published in May in "Akademischer Dienst" reports how the Länder are tackling this problem.

Among the measures taken are the following :

- Voluntary prolongation of compulsory school attendance :

Those pupils who have completed the nine years of compulsory schooling without reaching the final ninth grade (i.e. those who have repeated one or more grades), may voluntarily stay at school for a further tenth year to obtain the leaving certificate which is normally granted on completion of the ninth grade. In Hesse, some 4,000 pupils are expected to avail themselves of this opportunity in the school year 1976/77 and thus to improve their prospects on the labour market.

- Introduction of a one-year preparatory course : All pupils who complete the compulsory nine years of schooling in the current school year and who do not find a job or continue their studies in a full-time school may attend a one-year course of preparation for gainful employment. The course provides both general and technical education. Twelve of the 30 periods per week are devoted to vocational instruction in the workshops of existing vocational schools to make pupils acquainted with various crafts and trades. The remaining 18 periods are reserved for general subjects, in particular for those which may improve their qualifications on the labour market. Pupils wishing to sit for the leaving certificate of the compulsory school while at the preparatory course may do so. Instruction in vocational subjects will for them be reduced to seven periods per week. Completion of this one-year course is equivalent to the three-year attendance at part-time vocational school which is compulsory up to the age of 18/19 : this, it is hoped, will make it easier for graduates of the course to find employment. Such preparatory courses will be introduced after the summer vacation in particular in North-Rhine-Westphalia, the biggest of the German Lander.

- Expansion of the one-year basic vocational course : In all Länder the so-called Berufsgrundbildungsjahr has been introduced in recent years but has so far not been attended by more than 10 % of holders of school-leaving certificates. This basic vocational course of one year's duration is a full-time course which provides an introduction to a vocational field combined with instruction in related general subjects. There exist at present curricula for some 10 such fields (metal work, wood work, construction, administration, commerce, etc.). The vocational training received in this one-year course is followed by later specialisation in a two-year period of apprenticeship (instead of three as is the rule for most crafts and trades). These courses will now be offered on a much broader scale in all Länder to cater in particular for unemployed adolescents. It is hoped that young people completing these courses will have a better chance to enter an apprenticeship.
- Expansion of full-time vocational schools : All Länder have decided to offer a broader intake to these schools which are as a rule of two years' duration and provide training for those who have obtained the leaving certificate of the compulsory school or the intermediate school. The schools are specialised in home economics, commerce and secretarial work, preparation for paramedical professions, etc., and many school-leavers who could not find gainful employment are at present applying for admission to these schools.
- Adult education : It is interesting to note that an increasing number of adult education centres are offering courses in which leaving certificates of various types of school may be obtained, in particular by unemployed persons. The centres are also offering courses by means of which the unemployed may improve their qualifications in specific general or technical subjects.

These educational measures are supported by emergency programmes of the Länder Ministries for Social Affairs, of the Interior and of Economics. These programmes, to many of which the Federal Authorities contribute grants, aim at creating additional work-and training-places in industry and commerce, at alleviating unemployment in disfavoured areas and at providing job opportunities for handicapped persons.

However, the disquieting question remains how to help those who do not seek such help. Those who are motivated to raise their general and vocational qualifications are a minority not exceeding one in four among unemployed young people. The majority seems to be waiting for the economic recovery to increase job opportunities for the unskilled as was the case in the past.

Akademischer Dienst, 6/V/1976 ; Informationen
Bildung Wissenschaft, 25/III/1976 ; v.M.

EUROPEAN descriptors : unemployment ; vocational training ; youth employment ; technical education ; prolonged schooling ; Federal Republic of Germany.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY : OVERLOADING HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The numerus clausus which restricts admission to higher education in favour of those who have obtained the best marks in the Abitur (the secondary leaving certificate) and refers all others to a waiting-list for admission in the years to come, has become so unbearable to the one third of the population concerned by it that the parties on the eve of the general elections have promised one after the other to abolish it. The Federal Chancellor SCHMIDT, on behalf of the Social-

Democratic Party, was the first to attack it and in mid-May his Education Minister ROHDE came forward with a seven-point programme against the numerus clausus. The opposition parties followed suit in early June.

Thus agreement seems to have been reached that from the academic year 1976 onwards admission to some 20 main study fields will no longer be restricted; only medicine, including veterinary and dental medicine, and pharmacy will remain numerus clausus subjects. This will be achieved by temporary "over-loading" of the intake capacity of universities and colleges until the smaller age-groups born in the late sixties reach higher education. The Vice-Chancellors' Conference, however, has already warned that this will lead to a "chaotic situation", and it remains to be seen how the Education Ministries of the Länder, who have the last word on agreeing to or rejecting admission limitations proposed by individual universities and colleges, will react.

The over-loading of higher education will necessarily result in an over-loading of the professions. So far some 60 per cent of higher education graduates were absorbed by the public employers - the State and the municipalities - and the remainder by private employers and the liberal professions. The teachersurplus which already poses grave problems to the Education Ministries, exemplifies the difficulties to be overcome.

The Education Ministers at their conference in early June in Hamburg concluded from the reports submitted that some 4,300 out of the 37,000 qualified applicants for the teaching profession in 1976 will not be able to obtain a post in the public sector. In 1975 only 2,100 applications had for budgetary reasons to be rejected. The teacher associations estimate that by 1980 as many as 100,000 teachers may be unemployed, if the present budgetary situation continues.

The Education Ministers declared that as long as the Länder budgets do not permit a further expansion of the school system, other measures have to be taken. Posts which become vacant should be occupied by more than one teacher on a part-time basis with corresponding pay. Voluntary retirement at the age of 60 instead of 65 should be facilitated. Teachers should be encouraged to seek employment in out-of-school education and in social work, and the universities and colleges should be enabled to offer the corresponding courses. Finally, unemployed teachers should be fully integrated into the social security and unemployment insurance system.

Such measures have already been taken in a number of Länder or are about to be introduced. In Hesse, for example, all posts which become vacant as from the school year 1976/77 will be converted into "two-thirds posts". The teaching load will be reduced to two-third, i.e. 18 instead of 27 periods per week, and the salary will be lowered accordingly. Contracts for these posts will be for a three-year period. It is hoped that 2,000 out of the 3,000 qualified young teachers seeking employment in Hesse in 1976 may thus be absorbed.

Although the teacher associations have strongly protested against any measure which lowers the status and pay of the teaching profession, public opinion seems prepared to accept that mass higher education will lead to a new type of society and a new middle class different from those which were based on the old liberal and elitist professions.

Akademischer Dienst, 18/III; 20/V ; 3/VI/1976; v.M.

EUDISED descriptors : higher education; numerus clausus; supply of teachers; hours of work; Federal Republic of Germany.

IRELAND: GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS

A report on graduate employment prospects drawn up by the Association of Irish University Careers and Appointments Services reveals that at the end of 1975 6.8 % of newly qualified graduates were still seeking employment. The report, which is based on a survey carried out in the five university colleges in the Republic for the year 1974-75, points out that this figure is almost double what it was at the same time three years ago, when it stood at 3.8 %. While some 6.8 % of graduates were technically unemployed at the end of 1975, the number actually in employment was 39.7 %, and of these 8.7 % had found employment outside the country.

The survey found that 9.6 % of first-degree holders had opted for courses in academic research or further study in Ireland, and that another 1.9 % had taken the same decision but were studying abroad.

Of particular interest was the survey finding that as many as 35.2 % of first-degree holders had registered for courses in teacher training. In fact, more graduates opted for teacher training than entered direct employment in Ireland. In the section dealing with those graduates who had completed the one-year Higher Diploma in Education course it is noted that 57.6 % of respondents (64 % of the 1974-75 Higher Diploma graduates responded) had succeeded in finding a permanent teaching appointment in Ireland, whilst 19.8 % were either unemployed or employed but still seeking a teaching position. The report says that it seems reasonable to draw the conclusion that the supply of qualified teachers exceeds the market demand, and that the figures mask a potential unemployment rate among graduates much higher than 6.8 %, since one must estimate a possible 20 % of those going on for teacher training as potential unemployment victims.

Of those first-degree graduates who succeeded in securing employment the biggest single group comprised those who found jobs in the health board and hospital services. The number taken on by industry in Ireland was very small. At 126 it was only marginally better than the 100 who found jobs in industry abroad. Dr. Derek SCHOLEFIELD, co-ordinator of the Association, said that he would like Irish industrialists to take greater cognisance of the fact that there was a pool of trained personnel available in Irish universities to recruit into industry, and that careers officers were not getting the notifications from industry and commercial enterprises about employment in the volume they would like. This raises the question as to whether industry and business are going outside the universities, possibly to the regional technical colleges, for their recruits.

The report shows that graduates are still relatively protected from the cold winds of the recession, but a breakdown of statistics reveals that some are more protected than others. The arts and social science graduates and those seeking careers in teaching seem to be the hardest hit, although this situation could be modified in part by a more determined recognition of a career path before entry to university. Careers officers unfortunately only have resources to deal with students who are in the last stages of their university careers, by which time faulty career decisions will already have been taken.

The Irish Times, 12/V/1976 ; W.F.B.

EUDISED descriptors : employment ; graduate ; unemployment ; supply of teachers ; Ireland.

ITALIE : CAMPAGNE ELECTORALE ET PROJETS DE REFORME SCOLAIRE

L'Italie est entrée de plein pied dans la campagne électorale. Les positions respectives des différents partis politiques sur les grands problèmes nationaux se profilent peu à peu. L'école, l'université, l'emploi, celui des jeunes en particulier, ne sont pas les moindres et semblent ne pas devoir rester sans écho au cours des réunions et débats électoraux.

Les jeunes et l'emploi

Pour le Parti communiste italien, le problème de l'emploi des jeunes appelle une intervention immédiate et décisive. Il s'agit d'apporter des réponses valables aux problèmes de centaines de milliers de jeunes chômeurs titulaires, pour certains d'entre eux, d'un diplôme ou d'une licence, et qui risquent, s'ils sont abandonnés à eux-mêmes, de se transformer en groupes de mécontents facilement manoeuvrables par les forces extrémistes.

D'ores et déjà, sur le plan législatif, le P.C.I. a formulé un certain nombre de propositions concernant en particulier :

- Une loi-cadre sur la formation professionnelle pour la réorganiser et la coordonner avec les plans de développement régionaux et pour éliminer des abus de la part des patrons dans le déroulement de l'apprentissage.
- Des mesures législatives facilitant l'insertion des jeunes dans l'industrie, en privilégiant la petite et moyenne entreprise ainsi que l'artisanat.
- Un plan de formation pré-professionnelle et des cours de reconversion. Ce plan devra être mis en oeuvre en particulier dans le domaine des travaux publics et des services sociaux dans les villes et les campagnes. Il tiendra compte aussi de l'évolution de la demande, de la part de l'industrie et de l'agriculture, de personnel permanent qualifié.
- Un plan extraordinaire de développement scolaire dans le Mezzogiorno qui prévoit une extension massive du droit aux "150 heures", une augmentation importante du nombre des écoles maternelles et des crèches et un programme d'alphabétisation dans les campagnes.

Le P.C.I. n'est pas seul cependant à s'être intéressé au problème de l'emploi des jeunes. Le gouvernement, en effet, tient prêt un projet de loi préparé par les ministères des finances et du travail en vue de faciliter l'insertion des jeunes dans le monde du travail. Ce projet prévoit notamment des contrats de formation professionnelle pour les jeunes entre 18 et 25 ans (jusqu'à 28 ans pour les "laureati" ou licenciés). Ces contrats, d'une durée minimale de 6 mois et d'une durée maximale de 12 mois, peuvent être passés par des entreprises privées, par des établissements publics à caractère économique, par des administrations de l'Etat, par des régions ou autres établissements publics. Les jeunes qui obtiendront un contrat ne seront embauchés, en aucun cas, en remplacement de travailleurs qui auraient cessé leur activité dans l'entreprise. Le seul objectif est de permettre à un certain nombre de jeunes de compléter leur formation professionnelle en les associant directement à une activité productive.

Pour chaque journée de présence effective est prévue une indemnité de 5.000 lires, jusqu'à un plafond de 100.000 lires par mois. Cette indemnité n'est cumulable ni avec un présalaire, ni avec des bourses d'étude à charge des établissements publics, ni avec tout autre revenu. 70 % de l'indemnité sont à la charge, pour moitié, de l'Etat et de l'assurance générale obligatoire contre le chômage involontaire. L'employeur perd son droit à être remboursé de ces 70 % d'indemnités s'il ne satisfait pas à l'obligation de mener à terme le cycle de formation selon les clauses prévues au contrat. Pendant la durée du contrat de formation ou au terme de celui-ci, les entreprises peuvent intégrer définitivement l'apprenti.

Les administrations de l'Etat et les régions établiront des programmes de services communautaires comprenant des projets spécifiques dans les secteurs de l'éducation, de la santé, de l'assistance, des biens culturels et de l'environnement, du patrimoine forestier, en vue de développer l'offre de contrats de formation professionnelle.

Tous ces projets, pour être réalisés, supposent des moyens financiers considérables. Or, M. MALFALDI, ministre de l'Instruction Publique, a annoncé récemment que le prochain budget de l'Instruction Publique serait amputé de 50 milliards de lires (soit 13 %). Cette réduction entre dans le cadre des mesures envisagées pour la diminution des dépenses publiques. Si les traitements des enseignants ne sont pas visés par ces mesures, d'autres secteurs sont directement concernés et notamment tout ce qui concerne la formation des adultes et, parallèlement, le recyclage des enseignants.

Le syndicat des ouvriers métallurgistes qui venait d'obtenir, au prix d'une lutte très serrée, le droit pour ses adhérents de bénéficier de 250 heures de temps de travail rémunéré pour assister à des cours en vue d'obtenir le diplôme de l'école moyenne (fin de la scolarité obligatoire), a réagi aussitôt par une série de grèves. Les syndicats acceptent d'autant moins ces mesures restrictives que leurs nouvelles revendications portent à présent sur la création de nouveaux cours pour l'obtention de la "maturità" (baccalauréat) et sur la titularisation immédiate des 3.000 enseignants chargés de ces cours depuis 1973. Ils réclament aussi l'extension du droit à l'étude pour les travailleurs qui seront embauchés au cours des prochains mois, travailleurs de la chimie, du bâtiment, du textile.

La réforme universitaire

Autant que les problèmes liés à l'emploi, la réforme de l'université constitue une des questions dont on parlera beaucoup au cours de cette campagne électorale. Le mécontentement des jeunes issus de l'université et à la recherche d'un premier emploi est considéré comme un problème important tant sur le plan politique que sur le plan social. Il va sans dire que les partis politiques, surtout ceux de la gauche développeront et exploiteront ces thèmes.

Le chômage des jeunes diplômés ou licenciés a été particulièrement dur depuis que l'université a été ouverte à tous ceux qui avaient terminé leurs études secondaires (cf. News-letter/Faits Nouveaux 1/76). Dès lors, les diplômes ne furent plus un moyen permettant l'avancement social et professionnel, ce que beaucoup d'étudiants, en particulier ceux d'origine sociale modeste, avaient espéré. Les Chrétiens démocrates, qui ont gouverné l'Italie depuis la guerre, seront sans doute accusés d'avoir échoué sur le plan des réformes universitaires, réformes promises depuis 1968 et toujours remises au lendemain. Seules un certain nombre de mesures à court terme ont été mises en oeuvre pour

faire face aux problèmes les plus immédiats tels que le manque de professeurs et de locaux universitaires (un projet a été approuvé en mars dernier pour financer la construction universitaire).

Les problèmes de l'université sont devenus d'actualité par le fait des communistes qui, sans doute dans une perspective électorale, ont présenté leur propre plan de réforme universitaire. Ce qui frappe dans ce projet, c'est sa similitude avec les projets de réforme proposés dans le passé par les gouvernements de centre gauche. Le projet communiste prévoit en particulier :

- L'abolition de la puissance et des privilèges des professeurs. Les professeurs d'université devront travailler à plein temps ; au moins 12 heures d'enseignement par semaine réparties obligatoirement sur quatre jours. Ils ne pourront exercer d'autres activités extérieures et, s'ils assument de hautes responsabilités politiques, ils seront placés en congé sans traitement.
- Un système plus démocratique d'autogestion de l'université par des organes tels que le conseil, la commission et le directeur du département, les conseils interdépartementaux, le recteur, le conseil d'administration, l'Assemblée de l'Université, un conseil national universitaire et des conseils universitaires régionaux.

Une nouveauté, le conseil national universitaire. Composé d'enseignants, d'étudiants, de non-enseignants, de représentants syndicaux et d'entreprises, de représentants des régions et des communes, ce conseil "propose", sans toutefois décider ni imposer, les bases des plans d'étude et détermine une politique universitaire au niveau national. Autre nouveauté, les conseils régionaux. Composés pour moitié de représentants désignés par l'assemblée régionale et de représentants du monde universitaire, ils sont appelés à coordonner la politique universitaire régionale avec les nécessités économiques et culturelles locales.

- La réorganisation des universités en départements : les facultés et les chaires attribuées personnellement à chaque professeur seront supprimées ; les départements organiseront un secteur d'enseignement et de recherche ou plusieurs secteurs ayant des finalités ou des caractéristiques communes.
- La création de deux niveaux d'enseignants seulement : les professeurs et les assistants, ceci afin d'éliminer des conditions de travail précaires et mal rémunérées, notamment pour les chercheurs, boursiers ou autres contractuels qui constituent une sorte de "prolétariat" de l'enseignement supérieur.
- La possibilité pour les conseils régionaux d'encourager ou de freiner l'accès aux différents cours de licence, en fonction des besoins. On se rapproche là, plus que jamais, d'une limitation de l'accès à l'université.

La nouvelle école secondaire

La question de la réforme de l'école secondaire est également à l'ordre du jour. M. Malfatti, ministre de l'Instruction Publique, a soumis à la mi-mars un projet de cette réforme au Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique et au gouvernement. Presque au même moment, M. BALLARDINI, président socialiste du Comité pour les écoles au Sénat, présentait un texte unifié intégrant les éléments des sept projets de réforme du secondaire déjà présenté par les divers partis politiques italiens (cf. News-letter/Faits Nouveaux 3/75).

Ce texte propose de prolonger la scolarité obligatoire jusqu'à 16 ans, au lieu de 14 ans : d'ici dix ans, la scolarité obligatoire ira jusqu'à la seconde année de l'école secondaire (16 ans) ; dès la troisième année d'application de la loi, l'obligation scolaire pourra être satisfaite en fréquentant un cours professionnel régional à plein temps.

Dans le texte de M. Ballardini, les enseignements secondaires comprennent un tronc commun, un ensemble de spécialités et un programme d'activités de projets. L'ensemble des spécialités s'articule en différents groupes : sciences physiques et naturelles, sciences humaines et sociales, philologie et linguistique. L'enseignement artistique fera l'objet d'une réforme distincte. Chaque groupe comprend plusieurs spécialités : le groupe "sciences physiques et naturelles", par exemple, comporte la physique, la chimie, la biologie, l'informatique, l'agriculture, la construction. Chaque établissement aura plusieurs spécialités. L'élève pourra choisir entre 12 spécialités et pourra aussi changer de spécialité. La première année, la spécialité n'a qu'une importance relative, ce sont surtout les matières communes qui sont importantes.

A la fin de la quatrième année secondaire, c'est-à-dire après douze années d'école, l'élève peut passer la "maturità" (baccalauréat) qui lui donne accès à l'université. Il peut aussi demander son admission en cinquième année ; au terme de cette dernière, après des études pratiques dans la spécialité choisie, il passera un examen de qualification professionnelle.

Le Parti républicain est hostile à ce texte. Il propose, quant à lui, une école secondaire de quatre ans pour tous et la possibilité, après le diplôme de fin d'études secondaires, d'entrer à l'université. A l'issue du secondaire, en plus des cours professionnels de divers types que les régions auront pour tâche de créer, le Parti républicain propose la mise en place d'écoles supérieures professionnelles annexées à des écoles secondaires suffisamment équipées, pour former des élèves à des spécialités non prévues dans les universités et répondre ainsi aux besoins de certaines entreprises.

Il Biennio, avril 1976 ; Il Corriere della Sera, 13/IV/76, 18/IV/76, 7/V/76 ; D.P.

Descripteurs EUDISED : réforme de l'enseignement ; emploi des jeunes ; chômage ; formation professionnelle ; enseignement secondaire ; enseignement supérieur ; Italie.

NETHERLANDS : IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

It is the government's intention to co-ordinate in-service training facilities for teachers with a view to producing a more coherent system. A ministerial note on the subject points out that in-service or further training is no longer solely concerned with improving the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter he teaches. Increased emphasis is being laid on general educational problems and on teaching techniques. In-service training must also be seen in relation to other facilities in the field of teacher education including the initial training institutions.

It is proposed by the ministry that two advisory committees be established, one dealing with the nursery and primary school levels, the other with the secondary school level. These committees would advise the minister on priorities to be adopted and on plans to introduce a co-ordinated system of in-service training for teachers.

It is the ministry's view that in-service training should be conceived of as a career-long process, and that it should be the responsibility of the individual teacher to make full use of the facilities available according to his needs. The three basic elements - subject matter, education in general and teaching techniques - should continue to be offered in in-service training courses, but the relative importance accorded to each would be adapted to meet individual situations. Working methods adopted in in-service training should be varied, but should as far as possible entail personal work on the part of participants.

Responsibility for mounting in-service courses would, in general, be that of initial training institutions, which would also be responsible for evaluation of courses. This evaluation would take the form of annual published reports describing activities undertaken and giving suggestions in the light of experience for modifications of methods used. This internal evaluation could be supplemented by an external one, when the effect of in-service training on the teaching in schools would be assessed.

The staff of institutions dispensing in-service training would be expected to collaborate in committees to work out course content, to co-ordinate activities at institutional level, to ensure the training of persons engaged to give courses, to conduct evaluative studies of the work undertaken, to update course material in the light of experience, and to lend support to teachers in the locality.

Until now, teachers have followed further training courses either by being granted special leave for the purpose or by giving up part of their own time. The fact that teachers have seen attendance at in-service training as a reduction in their leisure time has been a hindering factor in the generalization of such courses. The ministry proposes that information about training opportunities should be made known well in advance, perhaps several years in advance, and that the courses be organized in many areas to make it easier for the individual teacher to follow a course of interest to him and to permit him more readily to plan for advance in his career. The ministry is opposed to compulsory in-service training, but would not be averse to a small-scale project to study the effect of compulsion in this area.

As regards finance, the ministry distinguishes between two types of in-service course: the course designed to improve teaching ability and that designed to impart new skills. The state would assume most of the expense as regards the former, but in the case of courses imparting new skills there would be a relatively important financial contribution from the teacher, such courses being seen as further study opportunities enabling the teachers to apply for more highly remunerated posts.

Uitleg, Nos 454 & 458 ; A.K., W.F.B.

EUDISED descriptors : in-service training ; teacher education ; Netherlands.

NETHERLANDS : PARTICIPATION EDUCATION TO BE DEVELOPED FURTHER

Mr. J.A. VAN KEMENADE, Minister of Education, has informed parliament that 23m guilders will be set aside this year for the development of "participation education" (participatieonderwijs (cf. News-letter 2/74), and that this sum will rise to 40m guilders in 1977 and to 60m in 1978. Participation education, conceived to ease the transfer from school to adult working life by combining further education with practical work in the community for at least two days a week, was defined by the Minister as "learning by doing". He expressed the view that rather than compelling young people to take part in participation education, he preferred a policy of persuasion, and that if one persuasive approach failed then another should be adopted.

In the course of the debate on participation education, a motion to raise the minimum school-leaving age to 18 years was rejected by a large majority, the view being taken that compulsion dampened motivation and that to learn was a right not an obligation. Parliament did, however, direct the Minister to conduct experiments in the area of participation education to see whether the integration of general and vocational education was in fact the best method of approach. This would go some way to meeting the criticism expressed that the compulsory part-time education already in force had been inadequately evaluated. For his part, the Minister believed that stimulating those creative activities, which form part of civics courses, would offset an otherwise too great emphasis on technology.

The Times Education Supplement, 14/V/1976 ;
Uitleg, No. 463 ; A.K. ; W.F.B.

EUDISED descriptors : transition from school to work ; adolescent ; part-time ; participation ; vocational education ; social education ; Netherlands.

NORWAY : PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The committee on the future of vocational training has submitted its report to the Ministry of Church and Education. This committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Knut SCHØNBERG, was set up in February 1972 and comprised representatives of labour market organisations, vocational schools, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Schools Research Council, pupils and apprentices.

On the basis of expert studies which analysed the relationship between vocational training in school and the needs of the labour market, the committee proposes that vocational training be organized in 10 branches comprising 23 groups of subjects. In a future report the committee will discuss the contents to be offered by each branch of training.

It is proposed that vocational training should be of a duration of three years. Each branch would offer a common basic course to students opting for subjects within its area. It is expected that the full range of branches will be available even at smaller schools or at least within any given geographical area. The three-year period of training should be both complete in itself and open up possibilities for further training or study. The committee is of the opinion that there should be a stronger link between practical and theoretical knowledge in schools, so as to facilitate an all-round consideration of problems.

The committee stresses the need for co-operation between school and working life and proposes the creation of administrative bodies at central, regional and local levels as a means of furthering this objective. Several ways of acquiring vocational training should be open to pupils. For example, their whole training could take place in an enterprise, or the basic one-year course in school could be followed by on-the-job training, or there would be an alternation between school-based and on-the-job training. In this matter the desire of the pupils should be taken into consideration, likewise local working conditions, the specific need of individual subjects, the pattern of study offered by the upper secondary school. The same level of competence should be attained whatever the manner of training adopted.

In view of the rapid evolution in the field of technology, the committee feels that it is necessary to provide adequate facilities for further training. Vocational schools should, in consequence, have their capacity increased and work in close co-operation with institutes of technology, relevant organisations and industry. With this in mind and considering that with vocational training organized in branches teachers will be called upon to teach new developments in a broader context than previously, the committee emphasises the importance of further training for teachers. It suggests that this should be conceived as a career-long process to be conducted in higher vocational schools and in real life working conditions.

Vocational teachers, together with career guidance counsellors, should give information concerning job opportunities and requirements to pupils in the primary and lower secondary schools. At upper secondary level, pupils should have ready access to vocational information and to the educational alternatives available.

Framtidig yrkesutdanning. Samarbeid mellom skole og arbeidsliv (Norges offentlige utredninger, 1976 : 10) ; B.B.P.

EUDISED descriptors : vocational education ; vocational training ; Norway.

SWEDEN : REFORM OF WORKING CONDITIONS IN SCHOOL ADOPTED

At the end of May parliament passed the bill relating to the reform of working conditions in school. The bill had been elaborated on the basis of the SIA report (cf. News-letter 5/74) and the comments it provoked (News-letter 3/75).

The opinion that this new act would not solve all problems facing the schools but that it would be a step towards improving that which did not function well was expressed by many speakers from various parties in the course of the parliamentary debate.

The main features of the now adopted SIA reform are as follows :

- School work will not concentrate on academic activities to the exclusion of pupils' individual interests. The school will pay greater attention to leisure and cultural activities and to the work life that pupils will have to face on leaving school.
- Formal teaching will give way to a dialogue between pupils and staff.

- Curricula will be more varied with the result that pupils will not necessarily all learn the same things. Greater importance will, however, be given to the teaching of basic skills.
- The integrated school day, comprising both ordinary lessons and leisure activities, will be instituted as from autumn 1978, but during a transition period local authorities may adopt it on a voluntary basis. During the first two years the school day will not exceed 5 hrs 20 mins, whereas during the 3rd to 9th years it will vary between 6 and 8 hours. 200 m Swedish crowns have been set aside to meet the cost of the longer school day.
- At the end of the compulsory school day "leisure homes" (fritidshem) will look after pupils whose parents are at work.
- Local authorities will have a greater say in the running of schools. As from autumn 1977 they will be responsible for organising leisure activities, which will be done in collaboration with voluntary organisations. The government will allocate 25 m crowns to supplement local grants in this area.
- Government subsidies may be put to creating smaller classes, but funds must be earmarked for help for those pupils who experience severe difficulties.
- Special subsidies will be granted to local authorities in sparsely populated areas.
- The school must contact the parents of all pupils twice a year. This contact will involve both personal conversations and class meetings.

The reform will come into effect in autumn 1978. Prior to this, the National Board of Education will review the comprehensive school curricula. It is not anticipated that this will lead to any marked change rather to a shift of emphasis. The National Board's recommendations will contain a minimum reference to organisation models and to the utilisation of resources, greater freedom thus being accorded to teachers and pupils to organise their own work.

Svenska dagbladet, 9/III/76, 22/V/76 ;B.B.P.

EUDISED descriptors : working conditions ; leisure education ; compulsory education ; reform ; decentralization ; parent-school relation ; Sweden.

SWEDEN : NEW PROCEDURES FOR ENTRY TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Complex qualification and selection regulations designed to balance the intake into higher education institutions of students with school and work backgrounds have been published. The regulations are based on last year's decision of parliament concerning the reform of higher education as a whole and enter into force on 1 July 1977. Under the new system formal qualifications will be accorded less weight than in the past, but more will be given to the applicant's need to benefit from further study.

General qualifications

All who wish to enter the higher education system will need a knowledge of English corresponding to a two-year course at upper secondary school. This knowledge, however, need not necessarily be acquired within upper secondary school. Other requirements are that the applicant :

- shall be at least 25 years of age and have at least four years occupational experience or its equivalent, or
- shall have completed a two- or three-year line of study or an equivalent special course at upper secondary school and have a knowledge of Swedish corresponding to a two-year course at upper secondary school, or
- shall have acquired a corresponding level of education by other means, or
- shall have had at least 11 years of schooling outside Sweden or be otherwise qualified for higher education in his home country and possess an adequate knowledge of Swedish.

Special qualifications

Apart from these general qualifications, special qualifications are required in certain cases, for example competence in one or more subjects deemed necessary for the successful pursuit of a higher education course. Such prior knowledge can be acquired at upper secondary school or by other means. An applicant who meets the general admission requirements in respect of age and occupational experience may himself judge whether he possesses sufficient prior knowledge.

Selection

If the number of places for a given course is limited, and if the number of applicants exceeds the number of places, then there must be selection. For this purpose applicants will be divided into four groups to each of which places will be accorded in proportion to the overall number of applicants. The four groups will be constituted on the following basis :

- (1) applicants who have completed a three- or four- year line of study at upper secondary school ;
- (2) applicants who have completed a two-year line at upper secondary school or its equivalent ;
- (3) applicants who have obtained the necessary educational entry qualifications at the folk high school ;
- (4) other qualified applicants, for example those who are qualified in respect of age and occupational experience.

In addition to these categories, a maximum of 10 % of available places will be reserved for qualified foreign applicants.

The applicants to be accepted from each group will be determined by reference to a score within the range 1.0 to 5.0. In the case of applicants from upper secondary school (groups 1 and 2) this score will be based on achievement in the school leaving examination. This academic score is increased according to the length of the applicant's work experience. For occupational experience to be taken into account the applicant will have to have worked at least 15 months after the age of 16 and to have been in continuous employment for at least 9 months. Someone who stays at home to look after young children or other persons in need of care will be considered to be in employment for the purposes of entry to higher education, as will be people doing military service. Three months full-time work will raise one's qualification score by 0.1. A maximum of 2 points may be earned by means of occupational experience, corresponding to five years employment. Work experience can therefore compensate for an initial low academic score.

Applicants who have not been through the upper secondary school will have their academic score determined by means of an educational aptitude test. A maximum of 2 points may be earned in this way.

Applicants who have performed trade union, or similar, duties will be able to count 0.5 point for each two years of service. However, points to be earned through work experience and trade union service are limited to a maximum of 2.5.

If an applicant is qualified for several groups, he may compete for a place in each. In groups 1 and 2, 20 % of the places will be allotted solely on the basis of school marks, while 50 % of group 4 places will be reserved for applicants who have been placed only in this group.

Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Press
release , 22/IV/76, 21/V/76 ;
Svenska Dagbladet, 22/IV/1976 ; B.B.P.

EUDISED descriptors : higher education ; access to education ; selection criteria ; admission requirements ; democratization ; Sweden.

SWEDEN : BILL ON DISTANCE STUDY

Mr. B. ZACHRISSON, Minister of Education, has presented to parliament a bill on distance study. The bill is based on a report on distance study at post-secondary level (Distansundervisning : Lägesbeskrivning samt organisatoriska alternativ för högskolan) submitted last autumn by the TRU Commission on Educational Broadcasting, on comments arising from this report and on the results of experimental projects sponsored by the Office of the Chancellor of the Universities.

The report emphasised that "distance" could not solely be defined in terms of physical distance, and it indicated specific tasks and functions for distance study, namely :

- to provide facilities for study at post-secondary level in places far from a university or post-secondary college (distance bridging role) ;
- to function as a means of providing recurrent education (educational strategy role) ;
- to function as a means of providing educationally underprivileged groups with the possibility of studying at post-secondary level (social role) ;
- to reduce educational costs, to provide a cheap alternative to other forms of education, and/or to enable society to make a financial saving (economic role).

The report also dealt at length with the relative merits and demerits of a decentralised as opposed to a centralised distance-study system. The bill opts for a regional structure. The report had noted that such a system would permit the cheaper production of instructional materials, but that there would be a risk that they might be low in quality. It doubted whether the spreading of administrative costs among existing post-secondary establishments would result in any effective saving over a centralised system. On the other hand, the decentralised model would require less investment in premises.

The bill envisages that teaching aids and programmes will be produced by individual institutions within the six higher education regions created in last year's university and college reform legislation following the UGE proposals. Responsibility for course planning would lie with the regional boards, each of which covers an area around one of the six universities, with a central unit giving general guidance.

The bill also includes proposals for a new state-financed, non-profit-making foundation for educational broadcasting (Sveriges Utbildningsradio) which would combine the existing educational activities of the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation and of the TRU Commission which has had responsibility for certain experimental projects since 1967. The new foundation would start work at the beginning of July 1977.

TRU Commission Report : Distance education - an outline of the recent situation and some organisational alternatives for post-secondary education, 1976;
B.B.P., W.F.B.

EUDISED descriptors : distance study ; post-secondary education ; adult education ; recurrent education ; educational television ; educational broadcasting ; Sweden.

UNITED UNITED : HOUSE OF LORDS DEBATE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

At the end of March the House of Lords met to debate the condition of, and outlook for, the universities of the United Kingdom - the first such debate that had engaged their Lordships' attention for 12 years.

In the opening speech Lord FULTON, former governor of the BBC and chairman of the British Council, pictured the universities as isolated and beleaguered. University teachers had been singled out for unfair treatment under the government's pay policy. They had suddenly to adjust to a slow-down in expansion which blocked career prospects. But these practical difficulties were nothing beside "the feeling in the universities that they had lost public support". The quality of the services they provided had been threatened and most of the speakers who followed Lord Fulton agreed with him that the winds of popularity which so agreeably helped to propel the universities through the 1960s had proved more fickle of late.

Lord BULLOCK, Master of St. Catherine's College, Oxford, and chairman of the committee which produced the report "A language for life" (cf. News-letter 1/75), stressed in his maiden speech to the House of Lords the importance of the research function of universities. There was an unfortunate attitude that universities should concentrate on teaching to the neglect of other work, and that under present constraints the nation could not afford luxuries and frills. "Nobody supposes", he said, "that universities can have all they want or need. But I believe it to be important that within the limited sum available, account should be taken of the universities' function as centres of knowledge and research, as well as teaching institutions, and that this function should be recognized as indispensable to the economy and society in which we live and not something to be treated as a luxury or marginal purpose".

Lord ROBBINS, chancellor of the University of Stirling and chairman of the committee on higher education, whose report influenced thinking in this field throughout the 1960s and early 70s, reminded the

House that when his committee had recommended expansion of higher education, it had done so on the condition that there should be proportionately less specialization in first degrees. Yet his impression was still of an undue preponderance of honours specialization. He went on to warn the universities against "excessive narcissism" in the present circumstances. "I am sure we will do best for ourselves, and in the eyes of a not very sympathetic world, by doing our best to put our own house in order and, despite straitened circumstances, to maintain our standards".

A sharper touch of criticism came in the speech of Lord ECCLES, Minister of Education on two occasions in the past, who attacked the complacency and self-satisfaction which distinguish the British scene. The country's education system had a special responsibility for the general national decline. The country was now starved of trained manpower, of managers and salesmen fluent in foreign languages. A recent complaint of the University Grants Committee about students lacking some of the basic skills needed for the courses for which they had entered was seen by Lord Eccles as evidence of poor standards in the schools which he linked to the wholesale change to comprehensive schools. In his view the proposed merger of the Ordinary Level and Certificate of Secondary Education examinations would "lower still further the attainment of able boys and girls". He supposed we had to thank "those soft-hearted educationists who believe that no child should ever fail anything". His conclusion was that universities should not stand aloof from the debate on school reform, universities having a role to play in curriculum development at all levels. In his view any attempt to extend university first degree courses to four years should be resisted. There should be a new Education Act adding more compulsory core subjects to the single statutory requirement of religious instruction. There should be more adult education, and more students should experience a break between school and university.

It was Lord ANNAN, provost of University College, London, who urged the government to hammer out a policy for higher education which went beyond the present fixation on numbers and buildings. After making a plea for more day-release at 16+, he went on to advocate a policy of concentrating excellence in a limited number of centres by developing some institutions to carry out functions analagous to those of the French "grandes écoles".

Replying to the debate the government spokesmen, Lord DONALDSON and Lord CROWTHER-HUNT, said that the proportion of national expenditure devoted to education in general, and to the universities in particular, was not niggardly. Even if they could offer little hope of a bright financial future for the universities, it was the government's intention to return to longer term financial planning, when the economic situation improved. The House was informed that the Secretary of State for Education and Science, Mr. F. MULLEY, recognized that university teachers had not yet achieved what they regarded as a just pay settlement, but no assurance could be given that they would be accorded exceptional treatment when salaries were next reviewed. As for joint courses between universities in the UK and in other Common Market countries, a policy put forward by Lord Fulton, the government spokesmen said that a start had already been made in this matter. The government also recognized the importance of day-release and had in consequence given priority in future plans to the 16-19 year-olds.

At the end of their debate, the Lords were still undecided whether the universities should retreat behind their walls, preserving scholarship and the pursuit of fundamentals, or opt for large-scale involve-

ment in the whole process of education. But at least the issue was broached, and it may be hoped that the forthright example of plain speaking offered by the Lords will be copied by other bodies.

The Times Education Supplement, 9/IV/76; The Times Higher Education Supplement, 9/IV/76 ; W.F.B.

EUROISED descriptors : university ; public opinion ; aims of education ; financial resources ; United Kingdom.

UNITED KINGDOM : TOWARDS THE END OF SELECTION FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

A bill designed to end selection in respect of secondary education is making its way very slowly through its various parliamentary stages. When introducing the bill, Mr. F. MULLEY, Secretary of State for Education and Science, described how educational opinion had swung away from the grammar, modern and technical school system, how the idea of comprehensive schools had come into being, and how selection at 11 had come to be considered unjust and largely irrelevant. There were, however, a small number of local education authorities who had declared their intention to retain some measure of selection. There were also a few voluntary schools, likely to be an impediment to complete reorganization. "I should have preferred to deal with this by agreement rather than legislation", Mr. Mulley said, "but the government face an impasse. We can progress no further by discussion and agreement towards our declared policy of comprehensive secondary education for all. I have therefore introduced this bill". The bill would not ensure that all schools would be comprehensive straight away. Some authorities face problems of resources, and as reorganization is extended, it reaches into more difficult areas, and in some of these further progress at a time of declining school population is difficult to achieve. The bill does not propose to set a date by which comprehensive reorganization throughout the country will have to be complete, but does require local education authorities to submit plans within a specified time for the introduction of a comprehensive system.

In the course of its very slow progress towards becoming law, the bill has given rise to heated dispute as to the merits and demerits of establishing the comprehensive principle for schooling through to the age of 18.

Over the question of banding the government has reversed its original position. Banding is a device practised in particular by the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) designed to ensure a balance of able and less able pupils in its comprehensive schools which co-exists alongside a certain number of selective grammar schools. Pupils are graded in the last year of primary school as "above average", "average", or "below average" and shared out equally between schools. The idea is to prevent some schools from degenerating into "sink schools". The ILEA has been using the system for several years, but it has not substantially altered the pattern of admissions to schools - most children go to the school of their first choice. However, the ILEA envisaged problems arising when the grammar schools disappeared and asked the government to permit the banding system to be continued.

An amendment to this end was a first rejected. Mr. FOWLER, Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science said at the end of March that in the government's view banding was another form of selection, that the bill would give power to ensure that the comprehensive

principle would be observed, and that banding would be phased out over a limited number of years. By the end of April government thinking on the matter had changed. Mr. Mulley acknowledged that banding was a difficult issue, and that some local authorities felt it was the only way to avoid "gross inequalities in the social and educational balance of secondary schools". "Those concerned fear the end of banding would mean that some comprehensive schools would become grammar schools in all but name, and others would never attract more than a handful of abler pupils", said the Secretary of State. He has in consequence proposed an amendment to the bill, the effect of which would be that where genuine banding arrangements exist at the passing of the Act in an otherwise wholly or mainly comprehensive situation, he would not require proposals to bring them to an end - for such period as he felt fit.

Amendments concerning how best to cater for children with special talents have resulted in acceptance by the government that choir schools can continue to select children according to their singing ability.

The Conservative Party, not sharing the Labour Party's enthusiasm for comprehensive schools, has come up with the idea of "progressive selection". In the words of Mr. N. ST. JOHN-STEVAS, Conservative spokesman on education, progressive selection "means that you select on a variety of means of which an examination is part, but also parental wishes, school reports, interviews and assessments, and the selection can take place at any age - 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15".

Some local authorities are not at all keen to be brought into the comprehensive fold, and one local election has recently been fought successively in which a policy of retaining selection at 11+ featured prominently.

The bill has provided an occasion for polemics and passion. For this very reason it has come under criticism. Educational debate, it is argued, should not be about permissible techniques for allocating children among secondary schools, rather about what goes on in school and how to improve what is offered there, especially when it is recalled that a mere one penny per child per 40-minute lesson is spent in secondary schools to provide books, materials and equipment.

The Times Educational Supplement,
26/III, 23/IV/1976 ; W.F.B.

EUDISED descriptors : secondary education ; selection ; equal opportunity ; United Kingdom.